ORIGINAL

LOVE-LETTERS,

&c.

VOL. I.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ORIGINAL

LOVE-LETTERS,

BETWEEN

A LADY OF QUALITY

AND

A PERSON OF INFERIOR STATION.

"Love, like Death, levels all Distinctions." ADDISON.

VOL. I.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY J. REA, FOR

MESSRS. MONCRIEFFE, R. CROSS, EKSHAW, WILSON, WALKER, JENKIN, BURNET, BEATTY, WHITE, BURTON, BYRNE, CASH, MARCHBANK, HEERY, AND W. PORTER.

M,DCC,LXXXIV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

IT is an eaſy matter for an author to give his own hiſtory of his own work. When it happens to be a buſineſs of mere invention, no one is duly qualified to contradict him; and he may uſher it into the world in any form, or with any title, that may beſt ſuit the views for which he has written it.

When I assert the following Letters to be original, and written under the circumstances which they illustrate, I bring no proof; and therefore leave their credibility to rest upon my anonymous assertion, or their own internal evidence. If the latter does not accompany them, I do not wish the reader to rest upon the former. If I could have composed them myself, I would not have yielded the reputation of them to supposititious characters.

In giving this little work to the public, no secret is divulged, and no confidence is betrayed. The persons

ſons between whom theſe Letters paſſed cannot now be affected by their publication. One of them is beyond the reach of this world's contempt or approbation, and the other is entirely regardleſs of it.—They were ſent to me from the country, accompanied with a requeſt that I would ſuperintend the publication. The taſk aſſigned me I have endeavoured to fulfil;—and, if the language of tender, virtuous, and poliſhed minds, has any value,—if a chaſte and mutual, but ſingular paſſion, is calculated to intereſt and to charm,—if affecting pictures of human hopes, agitations, and diſappointments,

pointments, are inſtructive to the mind,—theſe Letters cannot fail of being received with that approbation, which, in my opinion, they ſo highly deſerve.

THE EDITOR.

ORIGINAL

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LOVE-LETTERS,

&c.

LETTER THE FIRST.

To ———————.

IT has very ſeldom happened, in the courſe of an anxious life, that I have ever been hurried away by any irreſiſtible impulſe. Such, however, is my preſent ſituation; and it muſt be, ſurely, under the direction of ſome magical influence that I am now forced to my writing-table, and animated into the preſumption of telling a tale to your heart which proceeds warm from my own. If I ſhould be

guilty of an error, you will ſurely forgive me; for the errors of ſentiment, which have been pitied by the graveſt Cynics, cannot fail, I ſhould hope, of a pardon from you.

The occaſional converſations which, for ſome time paſt, I have enjoyed with you, have been my pride—may I ſpeak the truth of my heart, they have been my ſupreme happineſs: but the laſt, in particular, with which you condeſcended to honour me, made ſuch forcible impreſſions upon my mind, that ſleep itſelf could not obſcure them for a moment; for my pillow furniſhed the hiſtory I am about to tell you, and gave the ſubject of this letter.

You may, perhaps, ſilently obſerve that our acquaintance has not been of ſufficient duration and experience to juſtify ſuch ſentiments as theſe. Alas! what is ſo unconſcionable

unconſcionable as that tedious length of time which ſome people waſte in framing their opinions of others? Life is too ſhort to allow a long ſpace in forming the connections of it; and I ſhould never wiſh to approach that character which would not let me into ſome general view of it in the converſation of an hour. That heart, believe me, is not worth a ſigh, which requires the inſpection of days, weeks and months, to aſcertain its colour and complexion. I perceived the excellence of yours before twenty ſentences had eſcaped your lips; and every ſucceeding expreſſion and ſentiment confirmed me in the unalterable opinion.

With this idea of you, it may, perhaps, appear contradictory in me to preſent an unſubſtantial dream to your attention, and to offer to ſuch an underſtanding as yours the airy viſions of excurſive fancy. But as this fine ſpun web of imagination

gination owes its brighteſt colours and curious texture to you, I may be juſtified by your goodneſs, in laying it at your feet; and if, when you are at breakfaſt, or while your hair is dreſſing, or at any other time, it ſhould make five minutes paſs away more agreeably than they would otherwiſe have done, I ſhall not have dreamed or written in vain.

When I returned home on Wedneſday night, on tracing the events of the day which was paſt, my mind could not reſt, for a moment, but on that part of it which fled ſo ſwiftly away in your ſociety. Your charming converſation afforded me the moſt pleaſing, anxious ſubject of reflection, till weary nature forced me to my pillow. Here fancy ſeized upon the delightful theme, and thus continued it, through the night, in all the luxury of paradiſaic viſion.

I dreamed

I dreamed that I had been, for a long time, attached to you by the moſt paſſionate and conſtant affection. I dreamed, alſo,—oh the flattering and preſumptuous fancy!—that you had returned it with equal ardour and ſincerity, to the ſupreme honour and happineſs of my life. But this ſtate of perfect pleaſure was not deſtined to laſt; for I thought that an incurable diſeaſe ſuddenly ſeized upon me,—that I claſped you in a laſt agonizing embrace, and deſcended into the ſhades of death. No ſooner was I ſeparated from life, than I appeared to be borne away with a rapidity which precluded all obſervation, and found myſelf, as it were, in an inſtant, before a portal of gold, beſide which ſtood a form, clad in white, the lineaments of whoſe countenance were of celeſtial brightneſs. As I approached, he opened the gate, and, leading me through it, I beheld a paradiſe of delight, which the utmoſt ſtretch

of

of human language is not equal to deſcribe, nor the pigmy graſp of human comprehenſion to conceive. As I ſtood gazing on the wondrous ſcene with aſtoniſhment and rapture,—What is this enchanting place, I exclaimed, and what is the employment of its bleſt inhabitants! *Love, eternal love,* anſwered a bright pair of angelic beings, who flew ſwiftly by me. *Love, eternal love!* I replied;—oh, wherefore then is not my Lucinda here? Methought, thy dear idea, which had been the pride of my mortal nature, clung to my immortality.

This place, ſaid my heavenly conductor, is the paradiſe of thoſe ſpirits whoſe hearts were united by a pure, chaſte, and diſintereſted paſſion on earth: here they receive the reward of uninterrupted, eternal, ſeraphic love—Purſue that path, added he; it will conduct thee to the valley where thou muſt remain till

till the arrival of thy Lucinda, when it will be permitted you both to join the ſociety of thoſe bleſſed ſpirits who are united to each other for ever. I thought, that, in obedience to his commands, I paſſed along, through groves of perfume and by fountains of chryſtal, and ſoon reached the happy valley, where my arrival was made known by a ſymphony of divine raviſhment from the lips of cherubs. The faireſt of them put a golden harp into my hands, and I joined the chorus. The ſole employment of thoſe who wandered in this Elyſium was a continual praiſe of that object of their affections, whoſe appearance there was to enlarge their happineſs, and complete it for ever.

Here, methought, I waited for Lucinda, and inceſſant ſtruck my golden lyre to her praiſe, while, in many an angelic note, I ſung the purity of our love, and

the

the bleſſed reward which was to be the conſummation of it. But, as I ſung, the heavenly choir declared another arrival: ſo lovely, ſo charming was the form, it could be no one but my Lucinda: I haſtened to her, and the conducting miniſter led us away to the joys of a bliſsful and eternal union. Here, curſe on the intruding morn! I awoke; yes, I awoke but to lament how firm a rock ſupports our cares, and with how ſwift a wing our pleaſures fly away!

Such then was my dream: and if you ſhould condeſcend, perchance, to approve this picture of it, and to pardon my preſumption in writing it to you, whenever I dream of you again, I ſhall think it an indiſpenſable duty, as I ſhall feel it an inexpreſſible pleaſure, to preſent you with another hiſtory from the land of viſions.

I have the honour to be, &c &c.

LETTER

LETTER THE SECOND.

To Mr. ———.

THOUGH your dream was aſſuredly inſpired by ſome celeſtial power,—and though it is highly flattering to my vanity, does it become me to anſwer the letter which contains your beautiful deſcription of it?—This is a queſtion which I offer to you, without having dared to addreſs it to myſelf. The conteſt between reaſon and inclination is unequal and of ſhort duration: indeed, my underſtanding is not ſufficiently enlightened to diſcover why reaſon ſhould oppoſe itſelf with ſo much rigour to the inclinations of an unperverted mind. Where is the imprudence, or what can be the crime, in acknowledging the pleaſure which ſuch a letter as yours is formed to beſtow on her who receives it? If it had appeared

in

in a printed volume, I might have admired it without reſerve, and have declared my admiration without the fear of reproach. Why may I not add, for it is the truth, that I ſhould have wiſhed it to have been written to me? Finding myſelf then, as I now do, in the poſſeſſion of ſuch a letter,—why may I not aſk for ſuch another?

LETTER THE THIRD.

To ———————.

Friday evening.

YOU have done me great honour indeed, in condeſcending to ſet my heart at reſt as to the ſucceſs of my letter, by ſuch an early information that it has not diſpleaſed you. You tell me that my dream muſt have been inſpired by ſome celeſtial power.

power. Yes, you are that celeſtial power; for your ſpirit flew to me in the night, and ſcattered thoſe pleaſing thoughts around my pillow.

This acknowledgement ſhould have been made the moment I received your anſwer, but I was obliged to hurry out of town without even the repoſe of an hour. I took your letter as my companion to ſolace me on the way, to eaſe the labour of travelling, and to beguile the tediouſneſs of the journey. Short as it is, I would not exchange it for the faireſt volume which learning, genius, and fancy, ever combined to write. When, therefore, you wiſh to diſpenſe a bleſſing to me, ſend me ſuch another. I cannot receive them too often,—I cannot poſſeſs too many of them. It will be doing me a real good to give me ſuch ſure and certain means of comfort and honour. In the chill hour of inſenſibility, the ſight of them

them will awaken my languid virtue, while their perusal will give a glow to my cheek which study may have made pale, and convey a warmth to my heart which, from the falsehood of friends, the zeal of enemies, and the habits of retirement, may be disposed to look coldly on the world.

For some few years past, I have lived a life of solitude: what was at first the child of necessity, is now the object of my choice; and that obscurity which originated from the indulgence of pride and folly, is now adopted from reason and reflection. In this solitude I should have remained, forgetting and forgotten, till I had stolen from the world for ever. Some unexpected events, however, took place, which compelled me to open my lattice and look into the midst of it; when I missed so many faces that were once pleasant to behold, and saw others so changed

changed by time and ſorrow, that I was diſpoſed to ſhut my window again, and to look from it no more. But ſince the firſt ſurvey all has not been dark and diſmal; there was a ſunny hillock, whereon you ſat, and heaven, in its mercy, directed my eyes to the celeſtial object.

You are pleaſed to ſay that my letter is highly flattering to you. Alas, dear lady! ſuch applauſe as mine is not worth a moment's vanity. I have no riches—honours and titles belong not to me; my day is paſt, and let it go; nor do I wiſh for its return, unleſs, by giving conſequence to the vanquiſhed, it may extend the fame of the victor. Indeed, I have an heart, a faithful heart; but what of that? Its only wealth is love; truth alone has ennobled it, and conſtancy is the only title it has to boaſt. When, therefore, I preſent it to you, I am like the Indian at his ſacrifice; he bows down to the ſuperior power,

power, and, while he places his offering upon the altar, has no other wiſh but that it may be received, and does not preſume to look for a return. Do not, however, think my humility affected! I am writing of that external importance which the world admires; but the interior dignity of the mind, which a world, that only looks to the ſurface, knows nothing of, does, I truſt, belong to me, and, were I covered with rags, it ſhould ſtill be mine. If I had not ſome excellence in my own heart, I ſhould be inſenſible to that which is ſo conſpicuous in yours. I cannot, therefore, be the cauſe of lighting up the faintest flame of vanity in your breaſt. If exterior advantages charm you, be not vain of my admiration; for I have none of them. If the ſincere regard of a mind conſcious of its own dignity, ſhould be your choice,—be not vain when I humbly offer you mine,—for it is your due.

I paſſed,

I paſſed, yeſterday afternoon, through a moſt beautiful part of Berkſhire. The Thames rolled its ſilver wave on my right, and to my left, the hills, vallies, and woodlands, appeared in all the luxury of vernal beauty. But this was not all; your letter was in my hand. In a garden, by the way-ſide, I ſaw a youthful pair walking together; ſhe hung upon his arm, and two beautiful children were playing about them; I gazed for a minute on the affecting group, and then I looked upon your letter. I turned my eyes to the river, and ſaw the inverted landſcape in its cryſtal mirrour, and then I looked upon your letter. I beheld a boatman ſtop his little bark; I heard him call to a milk-maid in the meadow; ſhe left her pail upon the graſs, and haſtened to the bank; they were in tender converſe together, when my eyes turned from them to look upon the paper inſcribed with your name. At the bottom of a

ſteep

ſteep hill I alighted from the chaiſe, and as I ſlowly aſcended, my attention was turned to a ſparrow labouring to bear away a ſtraw which lay in the road; thrice it dropped from his bill, and thrice the little bird returned to the charge: I watched its perſeverance, and ſhared in all its pleaſure, when it bore away the prize to a neighbouring buſh;—and again I looked upon your letter. Oh, cried I, if ever Heaven's grace gave feeling to my heart, or eloquence to my lips, it is at this moment! wherefore, oh wherefore, then, is not Lucinda by my ſide? Her ear is the avenue to a tender ſpirit, and I would fain pour my whole ſoul into it. In this manner did I exclaim;—and once more I read your letter. Thus do I deceive the moments when diſappointment would weigh me down; when my heart poſſeſſes a wiſh that cannot be gratified, or ſome object I purſue flies ſo faſt away, that it cannot be overtaken.

I ſhall

I ſhall ſoon, I believe, ſhut my lattice again upon the world, perhaps for ever; but, ere I retire to the ſhade, you ſhall be informed of my diſtant bower: not that I mean to intrude from thence upon you or your pleaſures; nor do I expreſs a wiſh that you ſhould ever think on me, but when nothing more pleaſing waits upon your remembrance. The evils of life will come; beauty fades like a flower, and the faſhion of every thing paſſeth away: I ſhall, therefore, tell you of my ſolitude, that, when lovers prove falſe, you may know where there is one who would be eternally faithful; and, when friends forſake you, where you have a friend indeed. You may tell me that theſe profeſſions are made at too early a period of our acquaintance; but the mind, capable of diſtinguiſhing excellence, ſees it at once and loves it. Art may, in time, create a paſſion, and perſeverance will oftentimes convert diſguſt into ſomething that

reſembles love: but this is a buſineſs in which intereſt and paſſion take the ſole direction, and wherein the heart is wholly unconcerned. I am not now to learn the art of diſcerning characters: the depths of that ſcience have already been fathomed by me; and, were I to be bleſſed with the knowledge of you for an age, I ſhould not poſſeſs an higher regard for your virtues, than that with which my boſom pants at this moment.

Indeed, indeed, there is nothing in this letter which can afford you any the leaſt reaſon for vanity. It is for me to be vain, who poſſeſs the elevating idea of being permitted to tell you what I have told you. To love excellence is to feel it; and every object which affords new ideas of what is excellent, ennobles the heart, and raiſes it nearer to that ſtate of exaltation which it is made capable of attaining. If, therefore, I ſhould ſee you

no more; and the adieu of this night ſhould be an adieu for ever, I ſhould be much your debtor. Indeed, while life remains, I ſhall have continual reaſon to bleſs the hour which gave to my heart an image that it will never loſe, till it is quite cold and pants no more.

Saturday night.

THE former part of this packet—for I cannot call it a letter—was written yeſterday evening, and I intended to have done myſelf the honour of ſending it to you the moment I arrived in town; but laſt night your ſpirit flew to me again! I had another viſion, and I take up the paper once more to tell you of it, as I promiſed.

And I thought in my dream, that, having paſſed through a wood, in a verdant receſs at the end of it, I ſaw a female figure reclining upon a couch of roſes,

beneath the ſhade of wide-ſpreading beeches. Her form was truly graceful, and her aſpect beamed attractive beauty. She wore a looſe robe of white, whoſe careleſs folds were bound with roſe-coloured ribbons. A large mantle of purple ſattin, which was faſtened by a golden cordage to the over-arching boughs, formed a floating pavillion behind her. On the right, I beheld a wide-ſtretching valley, through which flowed a mighty river, on whoſe boſom commerce ſwelled innumerable ſails, and on whoſe banks aroſe a ſtately city, rich in gilded domes and glittering ſpires. On the left, the eye was cheared with hill and dale, and every varied ſcene of rural beauty. While I was looking with aſtoniſhment at the objects before me, a brilliant equipage, with a large train of attendants, appeared at a ſmall diſtance, and a young man of a moſt dazzling figure deſcended from it. The whole art of embroidery had been

been exhauſted on his garments;—a ſtar glittered on his breaſt, a ribbon flaunted on his ſhoulder, and his perfumes ſweetened the air around him. As he approached the fair one,—What, ſaid he, are theſe charms to be buried in the wilderneſs? Are thy ſmiles to enchant the deſert? Is the ſweetneſs of your voice to recal Orphean days, and tame the beaſts of the foreſt? Haſte, oh haſte away! My chariot, burniſhed with ſilver, waits to bear you to the midnight maſk and joyous revel. Haſte with me, and pleaſure ſhall be your ſlave. The diamond of the Eaſt ſhall ſparkle around you, Arabia's perfume ſhall breathe for you, and the ſilk-worm of the South ſhall toil for your veſture. Come then, and let me ſhew the world what beauty is: come then, and be the faireſt where all are fair; my arm ſhall ſupport your ſteps, and you ſhall be my love! He ſpoke; and, with a look of conſcious

power, was about to ſeize her hand, when a youth ſtepped forth from the thicket. The fluſh of health was on his cheek, his hair hung in ringlets on his ſhoulders, and, though his dreſs was unadorned, his manners were not devoid of grace; and I could diſcern, beneath the amiable ſimplicity of his appearance, that he had been in courtly halls, and revelled in ladies bowers.

Behold, ſaid he, the winter is paſt, the rain is gone and over, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the ſinging birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. There I have an humble, but a peaceful dwelling: the woods ſhelter it from the northern blaſt, and a clear ſtream flows before it, which in ſummer is never dry, and in winter never overflows: the lavender grows by the path-ſide, the ſweet-briar ſprings in the hedges, the woodbine twines around the trees,

trees, and the vine ſuſpends its purple friutage before the caſement. All that Nature can give, in her varying ſeaſons, ſhall be yours. Flowers of every colour and of every ſcent ſhall blow for you; there ſhall be bowers of lilac for the ſpring, and bowers of roſes for the ſummer. The moſt delicious fruits that Pomona yields ſhall court your taſte. The oak ſhall ſpread wide its branches to ſhade you from the noon-tide ray, and the birds ſhall ſerenade your evening walk with the muſic of their groves. When winter comes, the faggot ſhall blaze chearful on the hearth; while ſcience will illumine the darkſome hours, and make the evening wonder at its flight. With theſe I will give you a fond and faithful heart. Come then, and receive thoſe joys which Virtue and Heaven approve. Come then, and walk the tranquil path of life with me. We will turn away from the dangers and deceits of a deluſive world, en-

joy every real pleaſure, be reſigned to every unavoidable evil, practiſe every human duty, while, ſupporting and ſupported, loving and beloved by each other, we ſhall proceed in peace and comfort to the end. Ariſe then, my love, my fair one, and come away!—

The youth bowed gracefully when he had ſpoken, and waited the reſult in an attitude of modeſt expectation. The fair one now roſe from her couch, but I ſaw no more; for there the viſion ended, and I awoke in ſuch a ſtate of diſappointment, that I tore my pillow with vexation.

Oh Lucinda! make the viſion perfect. Tell me, oh tell me, what ſhe ſhould have done!

LETTER

LETTER THE FOURTH.

To Mr — — —.

IF I could dream like you, I ſhould never wiſh to awake! Without pretending to enter into the philoſophy of dreams, a ſubject of which I am entirely ignorant, I ſhall only obſerve, that my nights are not interrupted or amuſed by painful or pleaſing viſions. In ſhort, I ſeldom or never dream; and whether this is to the honour or diſhonour of my brain, whether it proves that I think too much, or that I do not think at all, or whether it proves any thing or nothing, I leave to you as a ſubject for ſome future dream; for you have, aſſuredly, the happy faculty of dreaming how and when you will.

Some people have affected to conſider the time in which we ſleep as ſo much

loſt to life; and with ſuch dull folks as myſelf, who ſeldom poſſeſs a ſingle fancy to animate that ſtate of inſenſibility, it appears to be a real, but, in my opinion, no unpleaſant chaſm in our exiſtence. I am not formed to think the day too ſhort for the pleaſures of it. Alas! though in the May of life, and ſurrounded with the ſplendours of the world, I find the only real, unalloyed ſatisfaction in the ſolitary amuſements of my cloſet. There I poſſeſs an aſylum from the ceremony, the flattery, and the vanity of public ſociety: there I inſtruct my mind with the wiſdom of ſages now no more, and improve my heart in ſtudying the example of men who have left their experience as a valuable legacy for the inſtruction of poſterity: there I can retire to read, and to admire your viſions; and it is in my pleaſing ſolitude that I am now employed in anſwering the laſt of them. What a rich and abundant mine of ſatisfaction is

ſuch

ſuch a fancy as yours! What a bright ornament for proſperity, what an infallible conſolation in adverſity! It poſſeſſes the capacity of making the days of the happy much happier, and of throwing a ray of comfort round the darkeſt cavern of diſtreſs. I congratulate my friend that he is bleſſed with this rare gift of Heaven, and, were I a man, I ſhould envy him the poſſeſſion of it; but in the female character it is rather a dangerous than a deſirable quality. A brilliant fancy, accompanied with that kind of ſenſibility which gives it all its real merit, is a faithleſs inmate of the virgin's heart. It makes us the envy of our own ſex, the ridicule of yours, and, too often, the eaſy dupe of both. A woman, without ſoftneſs, is a monſter, and without a certain degree of ſentiment and delicacy ſhe cannot be amiable; but an active imagination, and an unreflecting ſympathy, are the ſecret and moſt dangerous ene-

mies

mies to female happineſs. However unjuſt or capricious the world may be, a certain degree of attention is due to it from every one who lives in it. Woman, eſpecially, muſt be attentive to it; ſhe muſt not ſtray from that line of duty which the common ſenſe of mankind has preſcribed for her conduct. The moment ſhe begins to exalt herſelf above its opinions and deſpiſe its cenſure, ſhe is in the high road to miſery and diſhonour. The affectation of ſingularity, even in the arrangements of our toilets, is a proper object for ridicule, if not for ſuſpicion. It is an idle folly, or an unreflecting vanity, not to adopt, in a certain degree, the faſhion of the day. Extremes are dangerous in every thing; but in a matter of ſuch perfect indifference as the article of perſonal Decoration, it marks a degree of folly unpardonable in well-educated perſons, or an almoſt criminal ambition to attract attention, when we exhibit

hibit an appearance directly contrary to the general and received mode of the ſeaſon. The conſequences of ſuch an affected ſingularity in the ſimple circumſtance of exterior appearance can never be productive of good; but when it deſcends into the mind, and operates upon our opinions and conduct, the conſequences will at one time or other, be prejudicial to the happineſs, and, perhaps, the honour of our lives. If, inſtead of writing to amuſe, my pen had the preſumption to aim at inſtruction, I could, within the ſmall circuit of my experience, find a variety of examples to eſtabliſh the truth of my doctrine, and prove the bad effects of a lively fancy and a melting heart in the female character. But to teach others is not my province or my ambition; happy, pre-eminently happy ſhall I be, if I can attain the reſolution to inſtruct myſelf. This letter, I fear is a proof, that, with all my moral precepts

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and mighty wiſdom, I can forgive myſelf where I ſhould be diſpoſed to blame another. The wiſeſt of men has ſaid that the heart is deceitful above all things; and I could almoſt wiſh that you would no longer aſſiſt mine in the too eaſy taſk of deceiving itſelf.

Here I ſhould conclude, but I cannot, with all my rigour, mortify you ſo much as to take no notice of your charming fair one beneath her purple pavillion. I will not pretend to make your viſion perfect. What might have been her choice if your dream had been uninterrupted, I muſt not preſume to determine, though it would not require a moment's heſitation for me to declare which would have been mine; but if you expect the communication of it, I am ſorry for the diſappointment that awaits you. Another dream may gratify your wiſhes, and ſet your buſy, curious heart, at reſt.

LETTER

LETTER THE FIFTH.

To — — — — — — — —.

Tel qui, bien eveillé, ne voit que des erreurs,
Voit la vérité dans ſes ſonges.

IT is not for the happy to look for other pleaſures in ſleep than a neceſſary repoſe from the fatigue of paſt enjoyments, and a renovated ſtrength to ſupport ſuch as are to come. It is a comfort indeed to lie down upon one's pillow with the pleaſing hope that the happineſs of to-day will renew its favours on the morrow. The wretched alone, they whom fortune rejects and diſappointment ſickens, who conſider proſperity as almoſt beyond their hope,—they may catch a tranſitory ſhadow of imperfect happineſs in the viſions of the night, and look to fancy for a painted repreſentation of pleaſures, whoſe ſubſtantial ſatisfactions they are not

not deſtined to enjoy. I am, alas! one of that number; and it is not from an heated imagination, or a levity of character, that I have recourſe to phantoms of my own creation; but from an allotment of inconvenience and diſſatisfaction, that ſeems to have ſhut up every other avenue by which the more ſolid pleaſures of life could find an entrance to my mind.

Dreams, like death, bring all diſtinctions to the ſame level; they elevate the low to a temporary height of greatneſs, and bring down the inhabitants of royal manſions to taſte the peaſant's lot. Capricious fancy can make kings ſubmit to the ſcourge of public juſtice, and raiſe the devoted convict to thrones and ſceptres, which he muſt awake to exchange for diſgrace and puniſhment. The dreams of the night have even lifted me to an eminence which the moſt flighty impulſe,

impulſe of my ambition could never urge me to look to, for a moment, during my waking hours. They have raiſed me to what I dare not repeat but in their own viſionary form; and I know not how your goodneſs could pardon me in deſcribing to you the irregularities of my preſumptuous imagination. But the perfect benevolence of ſuch an heart as yours, not only knows how to forgive, but, inſtead of chaſtiſement, to beſtow favour. When, in the common order of things, I ſhould have encountered diſgrace, you have deigned to diſpenſe the bleſſing of friendſhip. But having once begun this career of condeſcenſion, it would be barbarity in the extreme to refuſe a continuance of it. The aged penſioner, who has, for years, found relief againſt poverty and ſickneſs by the bounty he receives at your gate, ſhould the ſurly porter be commanded to turn him from it, has nothing to do but to deſpair and to die.

die. I conſider your goodneſs to me as an alms of happineſs to my needy mind, which feeds and grows into ſomewhat of comfort upon it; and, ſhould you withhold the charity you have begun, I ſhould ſink, if poſſible, into tenfold ſorrow and diſappointment.

You are not a ſtranger to my dejected ſpirits. I believe, nay, I am almoſt certain, that you are acquainted with the melancholy detail of my unfortunate life, which ſeems to have been marked with uncommon ſeverity, from my cradle to the preſent hour; and, unleſs the beams of your favour ſhould melt the chilly rigour of my fortune, the ſame dark, dreary path which I have hitherto trod, will conduct me to my grave. There, at leaſt my troubled heart will find repoſe! I am as yet in the ſpring of life, and hardly know what it is to find a roſe-bud in my way. Mine has been a thorny path;

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and my mind ſunk beneath early misfortune, without poſſeſſing an interval of eaſe, in which it might gain a ſtrength of wing to ſoar above its fate. The natural ſenſibility of my character being encreaſed by a long ſucceſſion of wearisome diſappointments, became ſo habitual as to lead me into a ſeries of unintentional errors, which, however obnoxious to my own intereſts, afford me the conſolatory reflection that they have injured no one but myſelf. And that, after all is a great comfort. The fear of not doing right has been, times without Number, the cauſe of my doing wrong; and I am now actually ſuffering, from a miſtake of this nature, both in mind and fortune —if my portion of bread and water can be called fortune. That friend and benefactreſs beneath whoſe roof I firſt had the happineſs of ſeeing you, has ſuſtained me into life, more than once, by her kindneſs, and inſpired me by her zealous

counſels

counſels to make ſome ſtruggles againſt an adverſe and unmerited fortune. But it is ſufficient to addreſs my afflictions to your compaſſion; and I ought to be ſatisfied without wearying your patience with my complaints. Alas! alas! that ſenſibility, and that fancy, which you are pleaſed to conſider as the ſources of ſuch advantage and comfort, have been, I cannot ſay the deſtroyers of my virtue, for that I truſt is unblemiſhed, but the foes to my fortune. I feel too much, and act like the philoſopher of old, who, wrapt in profound attention to the ſtarry firmament, wandered from his path, fell from a precipice, and was drowned in the ſea. I have oftentimes been ſoaring ſo high on a cloud, that I have forgot the earth; and being ſo pleaſed in purſuing a ſhadow, that I have loſt the ſubſtance. 'Tis this ſenſibility which has ſo often made, and ſtill continues to make, me the dupe of others; and it is that vivid imagination,

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in which I have at times found a reſource from care, that makes me negligent in matters where ſucceſs waits upon continued attention. If I were a favourite of fortune, ſenſibility and fancy would ſerve to heighten and to adorn its pleaſures; they would alſo relieve the inconveniences and chagrins which are the common lot of every ſtation: but I have never known happineſs or fortune; that is to ſay, I have never poſſeſſed a common independence, but have, on the contrary, been engaged in thoſe occaſional ſtruggles to obtain it, which have prevented theſe qualities from acting but to the afflicting diſadvantage of their unhappy victim. Senſibility and fancy demand a ſtate of unagitated contentment, to aid the purpoſes of honour and happineſs. They are the luxuries of the ſoul, that can only feed enjoyment where there is a ſatisfied and certain independence of mind and ſituation. He that poſſeſſes the abundance

dance of to-day, but is to reſt upon caſual contingencies to ſupply the wants of to-morrow, muſt not have that vacancy from anxious thoughts, which gives room for the exertion of our feelings, or the play of imagination; but ſhould he be irreſiſtably urged to purſue the meteor, diſtreſs muſt wait upon his folly, and rouſe him from his dream to want and to repentance. If I might indulge a wiſh, and paint the ſituation that I would chuſe, were the power of making a choice conferred upon me, but no matter. I am plunging again into thoſe reveries which it is my intereſt as well as my duty to withſtand: beſides, my paper admoniſhes me to have done; and when I look back upon the pages I have written, I ſhould not dare to offer them to your patience, if I did not reflect that it would afford you the pleaſure of exerciſing one of the many pre-eminent virtues which you poſſeſs. The Dreamer, my fair Lady, is changed

changed into the Moraliſt; but the moral will become intereſting to you, when I tell you that it is the preſent hiſtory of a wounded ſpirit, which can only riſe ſuperior to a tyranniſing dejection, when it addreſſes its thoughts and itſelf to your benignant attention. It is from your goodneſs that I receive a chearing conviction, which I have not of late poſſeſſed, that I am not completely wretched. My ſoul has been favoured with this ray of comfort from the firſt and beſt of women. May her charities be repaid an hundredfold from the Fountain of Mercy!

LETTER THE SIXTH.

To Mr. — — —.

YOU are not the only example, even in my ſmall experience, to illuſtrate the truth

truth of what the wiſeſt of men has ſaid, that the race is not always to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong, nor bread to men of underſtanding. It is not that I would affect to quote the language of Scripture; but this portion of it has been, from circumſtances which I ſhall relate to you, ſo particularly impreſſed upon my mind, that it could not but occur to me on the reading of your letter.

A ſermon of Mr. Sterne's on this ſubject, was a favourite leſſon of the maſter who inſtructed me in the art of reading. Indeed, I had ſo often read it, both as an exerciſe and a pleaſing improvement, that I was at length able to repeat it with every proper emphaſis, pauſe, and inflexion of voice; ſo that I was frequently called upon to exhibit a delivery of that excellent compoſition among my relations, and their more particular acquaintance. But I do not mean to reaſon upon the matter;

nor

nor have I the idle vanity to repeat any of Mr. Sterne's perſuaſions to you, who can call forth a ſtore of arguments equal to the beſt of his, for yourſelf. Beſides, if I were even ſo inclined, in order to give ſome merit to a letter which will otherwiſe have none at all, you have precluded me from ſuch a deſign, by pretty clearly fixing the blame of your ill ſucceſſes in life to the particular qualities of your own character. That they are amiable and honourable in the higheſt degree, I will venture to aſſert; for I know ſome parts of your ſtory, and have wept at the recital which has been made to me of them; but they may, nevertheleſs, be ill calculated to obtain that advancement to which your honeſt ambition aſpires, your talents claim, and your virtues deſerve.

It is a ſerious, not to ſay a ſad reflection, that virtue and the nicer feelings of humanity ſhould ſo often ſtand in the way

of proſperity, and prevent the ſucceſsful operation of great and ſplendid abilities—but ſo it is;— and that man muſt be conſidered as uncommonly fortunate, who, born to make his way in the world, and poſſeſſed of unbending integrity, ſhould be able to ſucceed in the objects of his moſt reaſonable deſires.

Dependence and rigid integrity are not very compatible, where there is a deſire—and who does not poſſeſs it? to acquire independence. That virtue is its own reward, is the language of Wiſdom; but ſuch is the ſtate of the world, that it is not eaſily reconcileable to the reaſonings of men bred up in profeſſions, offices, and employments, by which they are to maintain their families and themſelves, and from whence their earlieſt hopes have been directed, according to their different capacities, occupations and education, to attain the means of future comfort,

fort, opulence, and repoſe. The anxious deſire of ſecurity againſt want, and the ſpurns which patient merit muſt of the unworthy take, are powerful motives to ſeize upon the common opportunities of obtaining the one, and of becoming ſuperior to the other. The ſucceſs of a rigid honeſt dealing is oftentimes ſo tardy and uncertain, that the moſt virtuous patience is fatigued into ſomewhat of a deviation from it. The diſſoluteneſs of the age, and the contagion of example, encreaſe the difficulties of keeping in the rugged path of inflexible integrity.

In the conteſts of life, virtue is ſometimes ſuch a clumſy weapon, that he who is moſt partial to it is frequently obliged to throw it aſide, in order to be upon any degree of equality with his competitors. When we ſee wealth and independence the ſlaves of inordinate paſſions, and the harbingers of injuſtice; can it become

a matter of aſtoniſhment that the poor and the dependent, that the father of a craving family, and the doating mother, uncertain as to her infant's future fortune, ſhould yield to the common temptations that ſurround them? I make no alluſion to crimes and frauds of dangerous magnitude, but to the ordinary current deceits which men ſilently practiſe upon each other to forward their own domeſtic intereſts. I do not hint at the pre-eminent villain, or the notorious deceiver; ſuch characters come not within the reach of my preſent reflections: they reſt merely upon the common claſſes of buſy men, who employ themſelves in their reſpective occupations according to the ordinary principles of the world, and paſs through life without being marked by any particular ſuſpicion or reproach.

I was once moſt forcibly ſtruck by the reply of a miller, one of our tenants, of rather

rather a dubious character, who, on my father's aſking him if he had taken up a reſolution to become an honeſt man, replied, without heſitation, An pleaſe you, my Lord, *I am as honeſt as the world will let me.* Nor do I forget the obſervation made by my father, in ſpeaking of the miller's anſwer. This fellow, I fear, ſaid he, is a bad man; but, alas! he, who in a world like ours is ever ready to ſacrafice advantage to rigid principle, though he is a moſt worthy object in the eyes both of God and man, ſtands but very little chance of being foremoſt in the race of life.

That charity ſhould begin at home, is a maxim of no ſmall eſtimation among perſons of very charitable diſpoſitions to others. The ideas of profit and loſs, the right, ſo generally adopted, of making the moſt of any paſſing occaſion, and of doing what others would do in the ſame

ſituation, govern, in a greater or leſſer degree, the bulk of mankind. This, I believe, is a pretty juſt picture of the croud in which every one finds himſelf involved on the theatre of life; and the few individuals, like yourſelf, who are the ſhackled ſlaves of ſentiment and honour, will generally make the moſt ſhabby appearance of all the numerous company with which they are aſſociated.

I ſhould bluſh at the thought of ſetting up intereſt againſt honeſty, but the latter ſhould not throw any fine-drawn impracticable ſcruples in the way of an alliance with the former. Integrity among men ſhould be governed by the ſame rules as virtue among women. A prude in either ſex is not only an unpleaſant, but a ſuſpicious character. To yield a baſe ſubmiſſion to the vices of other men on any occaſion, or to ſerve any purpoſe, is not a taſk that I ſhould propoſe to an enemy,

much

much leſs to you; but to paſs by, to bear with, and to yield to the weakneſſes and failings of mankind, may be a proof of virtue, inſtead of a deviation from it; and I ſhould think it a falſe, idle, and unmanly pride, that turns away from ſuch a conduct, becauſe ſelf-intereſt may be connected with it. The line of duty has its rigours—Religion itſelf commands them; and the happieſt life, as well as the higheſt ſtation, has clouds as well as ſun-ſhine. Beſides, it ſhould be remembered, that the individual is made for the world, and not the world for the individual.

Thus do I reaſon, in my ſimple manner, not to inſtruct you, but to give your underſtanding a ſubject to examine with attention, and as a ſource of inſtruction for itſelf. This is one motive for my long moraliſing epiſtle; but I have another alſo, and that is, to get away from the melancholy deſcriptions of yours. To

turn your thoughts, therefore, to more pleaſing objects, when I receive another ſheet of paper from you, let it contain what you paſs over ſo abruptly in your laſt; I mean the ſituation you would chuſe, if you were maſter of the choice. When I aſk this favour of you, it is not an idle curioſity that dictates the requeſt. I do not pretend, whatever may be my wiſh to poſſeſs the power of aiding the attainment of your wiſhes, however trifling they may be; but the ſympathy of a friendly heart can do you no harm! Adieu!

LETTER THE SEVENTH.

To ———————.

I Am really diſpoſed to believe that your benevolent diſpoſition has enjoined me a taſk

taſk ſo analogous to my own, merely to employ me in a manner which you knew would be ſupremely pleaſing to me. I am not going to build a caſtle in the air, a kind of architecture, in which I am no mean proficient, but, which is the ſame thing, to erect a cottage upon a mountain. The latter, according to the deſcription I am going to give of it, is as ideal as the former; you have, however, ſet me upon the buſineſs, and I ſhall have an added happineſs in obeying your commands: I ſhall indulge the flights of fancy without the leaſt alloy of ſelf-reproach, as they will be taken under the ſanction of your pleaſure and approbation. After all, fancy was given to man by indulgent Heaven, to help him along the road of life, to beguile the roughneſs of the way, to woo the heart from its anguiſh, and to heighten the pleaſures of virtue. When ſorrow ſhall make me pale, when pain ſtands menacing beſide my couch,

I will invoke fancy to bear me away into the fairy fields of fiction, and with the flowers which I gather there, I will bribe the enemies of my peace to depart and begone. But to the purpoſe of this letter!

I would poſſeſs a cottage, that, without being ſo large as to admit of entertaining what is called Company, ſhould be capable of receiving two or three friends. I would have it, in every reſpect convenient for them and for myſelf. It muſt, however, poſſeſs one room large enough to contain an uſeful library, with its appurtenances, a harpſichord, and ſufficient ſpace to indulge my *peripatetic* humour in walking to and fro at my eaſe; a pleaſure of no ſmall magnitude to ſuch a child of fancy as I am. This little dwelling ſhould have whited walls, with green window-ſhutters; and, to fix the idea of a cottage indelibly upon it,

it, the roof muſt be covered with the warm but humble thatch. Its furniture ſhould be uſeful and decent; I ſhould, perhaps, ſteer a little from my ruſtic ideas in giving to ſome particular articles the air of philoſophic indulgence. The choice of my ſituation would be a gentle eminence riſing gradually from a valley, with a protecting mountain behind, covered with lofty woods, except ſome hoary broken points that ſhould riſe above the whole, on which a miſt might frequent hang, and a cloud might ſometimes reſt. On one ſide I would have an open grove of ſtately beeches, and on the other the rural village, not ſo emboſomed in trees but that I might catch a partial view of its habitations, and the ſpire that ſhould riſe above them; nor muſt the diſtance be ſo great but that I might hear the lowing of cattle, the bleating of ſheep, the barking of the watch-dog, and the burſt of ruſtic merriment; nor can I paſs by the

chearful

chearful village peal, and the ſolemn curfew. In my front I would command a gentle ſtream to flow in ſilver meanders, and over the valley, rich in verdure and cattle, I would look to waving harveſts and ſcattered hamlets, with here and there a duſky tower, till my eye ſhould be ſtopped by the diſtant mountains. If I could by an eaſy walk gain a ſummit from whence I ſhould poſſeſs a proſpect of the ocean, and had, in my vicinage, the mouldering ruins of an abbey, the general outlines of my poſition would leave me without a wiſh.

For my internal regulation, I muſt have a garden for fruit, a plot for flowers, and a little orchard, which, though not in itſelf a very pleaſing object, I could not diſpenſe with for the ſake of its vernal and autumnal beauties: the bloſſoms of ſpring, and the fruitage of the latter ſeaſon, are objects too intereſting to the enthuſiaſt

enthuſiaſt of nature to be forgotten. I muſt alſo beſpeak a path to the ſide of my rivulet, where the waterfall ruffles its ſurface, that ſhould wind through thick plantations of odoriferous ſhrubs, intermingled with thoſe trees, whoſe peculiar elegance of form and contraſted foliage might, at the ſame time, afford a delightful variety, and beſtow a chequered ſhade. On the lawn before my cottage, as its undulating and verdant ſurface falls in a varied but gentle deſcent to the ſtream, I would poſſeſs a few ſcattered majeſtic oaks of a former century, whoſe branching foliage might ſerve, in certain ſituations, to break the diſtant proſpect, and divide it into an happy variety of pleaſing pictures. As to artificial ornaments, they ſhould conſiſt only of a ſepulchral urn, ſacred to Senſibility and to *Sterne*, and a Doric portico conſecrated to Friendſhip, of ſimple form, but Grecian proportions, which my pencil ſhould decorate with the

the attributes of the virtue it would be deſigned to commemorate. But as I ſhould wiſh to have my ſpring fragrant, my ſummer verdant, and my autumn fruitful, I ſhould be content that the richneſs of the ſoil about me ſhould render a winter's excurſions impracticable, or at leaſt inconvenient; and confine me for three dreary months to my ſtudies and to myſelf. I ſhould chuſe to be at the diſtance of a few miles from a market-town, not ſo much for the circumſtances of domeſtic convenience, as to poſſeſs a ready channel for my epiſtolary correſpondence, and a regular communication with the capital, to ſupply my literary wants. As to neighbourhood, I mean in a ſocial view, I ſhould be perfectly indifferent; though, if my pariſh poſſeſſed a pious, learned, and venerable paſtor, or if my vicinity afforded one or two ſuch characters, the advantages of my ſituation would be greatly heightened. As for a rich or potent neighbour, who

who might, for ſix months in the year, give the country an example of elegant vice or courtly manners, and, by his own vicious habits, and thoſe of his menial train, corrupt the ſource of rural ſimplicity, ſuch an one muſt not inhabit the ſame diſtrict with me. But it would, indeed, be no ſmall addition to my luxury, if, within the circuit of my morning's ride or evening's walk, wealth or power ſhould have planted the foreſt, in whoſe ſtately avenues, wide-ſpreading lawns, or ſhady thickets, I might view the herds of deer, an animal of uncommon beauty to my eye, at their ſports, their paſture, or in their repoſe.

For my houſehold domeſtics, I ſhould chuſe to have a middle-aged man, his wife, and ſon; to whoſe united care I ſhould entruſt the houſe, the dairy, and the kitchen, the ſtable, and the garden, with the numerous family of domeſtic fowls. Here then,

then, I think, this pleaſing, but unattainable picture ends, except that, for the maintaining my œconomics, indulging my benevolence, and purſuing my amuſements, I muſt poſſeſs what many an one riſques at an evening's game, I mean four hundred pounds a year. You will ſmile, perhaps, and ſay, that, as it is not good for man to be alone, I have omitted the moſt material circumſtance of human happineſs, and which would give the brighteſt colour to every object of my deſcription. I underſtand you well, and feel the full force of your obſervation in every vein of my heart. But I have already gone beyond my deſerts; I have already painted a ſtate of happineſs, which I cannot, in any degree, hope to attain. It would be indulging my fancy to an unpardonable extent, if I ſuffered it to paſs the limits where it now reſts. The little lonely *Eden* which I have juſt deſcribed, cannot be formed for ſuch a gueſt

a gueſt as me: how then can I place the faireſt, the lovelieſt, and moſt excellent of her ſex in this terreſtrial paradiſe, and elevate my hopes to the poſſeſſion of it? No, madam, it is impoſſible. Fancy may, ſometimes, render me preſumptuous, but it never made me a blaſphemer. I am a poor, wretched, mortal being, and while I remain in this world, I ſhall not aim at Heaven.

Thus have I obeyed your commands, and given to your benign obſervation a picture which my amuſive fancy had often pourtrayed before you aſked it of me. Whether it will afford you any pleaſure, I cannot tell; but the reality of the ſcene, though not the reality of the poſſeſſion, exiſts for me. Every diſtinct part of it is ſo familiar to my imagination, that it is impoſſible for me to have a more perfect idea of any object I had ſeen, than of this which I have invented. But it is not only

only my fancy that has imagined the ſcenes, my pencil has alſo pourtrayed them. The peaceful cottage, the village ſpire, the ſpreading oak, the winding rivulet, the diſtant mountain, and all the other conſtituent parts of my waking dream, have been ſo often deſigned, that they poſſeſs, as it were, in the view of my mind, a real and permanent character. It is impoſſible for you not to ſmile at my ſimplicity, to pity my weakneſs, and to lament theſe incorrigible propenſities; but I have not ſufficient reſolution to turn away from the aſylum of fancied good, when purſued by real evil.

You cannot but obſerve, that, although your laſt letter offers a very juſt picture of mankind, and abounds with much excellent inſtruction for me; I have paſſed it all over, to catch at the ſingle command, where my imagination, rather than my reaſon, was called to obey you.

But

But I ſee through the veil which attempts to hide the goodneſs of your heart, and I am no longer wretched. Can he be miſerable, in whoſe fortune your generous heart declares a feeling intereſt? Such a tender ſympathy as yours is more than ſufficient to change the colour of any fate.

LETTER THE EIGHTH.

To Mr. — — —.

I Was ſo charmed with the deſcription of your cottage, that I did not heſitate a moment to wiſh myſelf a fairy queen, or the miſtreſs of enchantments, to wave my wand and create it for you. Nevertheleſs, I cannot conſent that you ſhould conſign yourſelf, at once and for ever, to retirement

retirement and oblivion. At your age, and with your talents, you ſhould not content yourſelf with an innocent ambition: ſociety has its claims upon you; your country has a right to expect your ſervice, and Providence did not endue your mind with ſuch rare gifts, to be employed only in the practice of humble virtue, or to be pent up in the narrow circle of philoſophic ſolitude.

Your education has been ſuch as to qualify you for any ſociety, and you have nothing to do but to preſent yourſelf to the beſt, to be received with pleaſure, and cheriſhed with friendſhip. In your moſt fanciful moments, you never can have even hoped, that while you ſit muſing by your fire-ſide in winter, or reclining your liſtleſs length on a river's bank in ſummer, the bleſſings of proſperity are to be poured forth before you. That would be an idle dream indeed.

Fortune

Fortune is repreſented as a blind divinity, and the general experience of mankind juſtifies the invention of the poets. But, without diſgracing myſelf, or offending you, by an attempt to flatter you, I moſt ſolemnly declare, that, in my opinion, you have ſufficient merit to take the bandage from the eyes of fortune. The goddeſs, however, is not free from female venality; her altars are erected to receive the offerings of her votaries.

Having delivered my ſentiments, with a very ſincere freedom, concerning you, I ſhall write the ſame unreſerved language concerning myſelf. You will perceive for what purpoſe I at this moment introduce my character to you. Nature, without having been laviſh, has not been a niggard to me;—ſhe has bleſſed me with a good underſtanding, and paternal care has given it every improvement that the beſt female education could beſtow. To

theſe advantages muſt be added the embelliſhments of amiable, elegant, and inſtructive ſociety. Since I have been, in a great degree, my own miſtreſs, I have not ſuffered the ſuperſtructure of education to become uſeleſs, but have endeavoured to raiſe upon it a little ſtorehouſe of knowledge ſuited to my ſex and the ſituation of my life. But even ſuppoſing that my attainments had been greater than my own or any other partiality could ever have ſuppoſed them to be, I ſhould not be competent to judge of the extent of your qualifications. I know, from the relations of others, that your heart is of the beſt, and that your ſenſe of honour is rather diſpoſed to be in the extreme, than to fall ſhort of its right principle. Your converſation is that of a poliſhed and enlightened mind, and your exterior manners ſpring from the ſame origin, and that is all which can come within the ſcope of my knowledge or judgment.

But

But I have been informed from the moſt capable authority, that you are a ſcholar of the firſt rank, and that your ſcientific knowledge is of uncommon extent, and that you poſſeſs all that elegance and delicacy of taſte which is neceſſary to harmoniſe the diſtinct parts of general knowledge. Nor are you without an intimate acquaintance with the politer arts: of your pencil and your muſic I may venture to form ſome judgment; and I am morally certain, if you had not abilities for higher attainments, that you might obtain a commanding eminence in either or both of them. It is, therefore, an unpardonable fancy to let your days paſs away in complaint at paſt diſappointments and preſent inconvenience, when the moſt common exertions would redeem the one, and baniſh the other for ever. If the dejection of ſpirits is become ſo habitual, that you cannot, at once, ſtand forth and preſent yourſelf to the world in your own

form

form and character; if you tremble at occaſional diſcouragement and common obſtacles in the career of public life,—retire to your cloſet, give full ſcope to your genius, and let it direct your pen. How many men have been raiſed from obſcurity and dependence by a ſingle literary production? How many men, with talents inferior to yours, have, by the labours of their cabinets, opened to themſelves the career of fortune and reputation.

I counſel you with the ſiſter's freedom, as I regard you with a ſiſter's friendſhip. Rouſe yourſelf, therefore, I beſeech you, into that manly character and ſpirited reſolution which belongs to you: nay, as you have frequently expreſſed a ready and devoted ſubmiſſion to my will, I command you to do this juſtice to yourſelf, and I expect to be obeyed. It will not be in the power of common language to expreſs the ſatisfaction I ſhall feel, if my

perſuaſions

perſuaſions and entreaties ſhould prove the means of giving you to the world, of calling you to happineſs and reſtoring you to yourſelf.

LETTER THE NINTH.

To — — — — — — —.

I Know not how to anſwer the abundant kindneſs of your letter which is now before me; I am oppreſſed with the weight of obligation which I ſhall never be able to return; and I am melted into an exceſs of gratitude for a degree of friendſhip which it will never be my happineſs to deſerve. Since you have thus condeſcended to become my counſellor, my protectreſs, and my friend, it would be blaſphemy to utter any more the language of complaint; and it is now my

duty to look, with complacency, on the uncheery paths I have trod, ſince they have conducted me to you. Man has been deſcribed as a ſelf-tormenting, anxious, unreflecting being, that knows not what to ſeek, or what to chuſe; and when he is wearied with the fruitleſs purſuit of ſome fancied happineſs of his own creation, he vents his merited diſappointments in murmurs and complaints at, what he calls, his unmerited fortune. Though this deſcription is, by no means, of univerſal application, I am not the only one, by many thouſands, who is an example of it; but I am ready to acknowledge that I may be alone in finding ſuch a friend as you. Such a mark of heaven's favour is too diſtinguiſhed to be a common bleſſing, and how it happens that I ſhould be ſo regarded, is not a matter of eaſy reconciliation to my underſtanding. I have been long accuſtomed to dream of happineſs, and to awake to diſappointment;

ment; by your goodneſs, the morning, at length, begins to beam comfort on me. But I muſt repreſs the ardent ſentiments of my heart, to clear myſelf from your ſuſpicions of negligence and of folly; which, however they may have operated upon my conduct, have not been the predominant features of my character. When you have read this letter, I have not the leaſt doubt but you will ſanctify this opinion of myſelf, by your approbation.

My father, madam, was the nobleſt work of God,—an honeſt man; and, poſſeſſing that rigid, inflexible integrity which you have ſo well deſcribed, in a former letter, as unfavourable to worldly fortune, after the ups and downs of a commercial but irreproachable life, from various unfortunate circumſtances, in which, however, his character never received, as it never deſerved, a ſtain, he became a bank-

rupt. This misfortune he ſurvived but a few days, and left his widow, for I was then too young to ſhare her ſorrows, or aſſiſt her ſtruggles, to yield up his ſhattered fortune to the claims of his creditors. But ſuch was her conduct on that occaſion, as well as in every other circumſtance of her life; and ſo univerſal was the reſpect which attended upon my father's memory, that they unanimouſly agreed to ſettle an annuity upon her, which was ſufficient to maintain her widowed days in ſome degree of humble comfort. By the intereſt of one of them, I was placed on the foundation of the Charter-Houſe, where I remained ſeveral years, and did not diſgrace his generous friendſhip. The time at length arrived, when I was elected to the Univerſity, and, at this period, my mother received the ſum of two thouſand pounds left me by an uncle who died in the Eaſt-Indies. He was ſuppoſed to have been immenſely rich,

rich, and left me all his fortune; but, after three years delay, this ſum was remitted to England as the whole of his poſſeſſions. There was a great deal of foul play in this buſineſs; but who was there to examine into and ſupport the rights of the diſtant orphan? However, with the intereſt of this money, and my college exhibition, I was enabled to purſue my ſtudies at Oxford, with eaſe and independence. On my coming of age, and taking poſſeſſion of my fortune, I employed half of it in purchaſing an annuity for the life of my mother: at her advanced age, it produced a very conſiderable augmentation to her little income, and afforded her thoſe additional comforts which her growing infirmities required, and it became my duty to provide for her. I determined, alſo, to live entirely with her, and to rock the cradle of her age, till ſhe ſunk into the grave. But ſcarce had I made theſe filial

arrangements, and entered upon the exerciſe of this pleaſing office, when, without any apparent illneſs or previous complaint, ſhe expired in her chair, and left me alone. When I attended her dear remains to the common home which Nature has provided for all her children, I had no other wiſh, but that the ſame dreary tomb had been ordained, by the will of Heaven, to have received us both at the ſame awful moment. The income ariſing from the remains of my little fortune, eſpecially as the term of my college exhibition was now completed, was not ſufficient to afford me a common maintenance; I, therefore, encreaſed my petty revenue, by purchaſing an annuity for my life, and returned immediately to Oxford, with the hopes of alleviating the pangs of diſappointment by the ſevere engagements of philoſophic ſtudy.

After

After I had paſſed about two additional years at the Univerſity, the excellent man who preſided over the college of which I was a member, and whoſe paternal kindneſs, will hold a place in my heart till it beats no more, recommended me to conduct a young man of large expectations on his tour through Europe. I was delighted at this appointment beyond expreſſion: to viſit countries of which I had heard and read ſo much, to tread on claſſic ground, to view the remains of antient Rome, and to examine the ſplendour of its preſent ſtate, with the expectations of all that mental luxury which a three years voyage through the different nations of Europe would afford me, was a degree of happineſs which I did not then ſuppoſe could receive any interruption. But I had reckoned, as I have ſo often done, without knowledge, and ſoon found, by a very mortifying experience, that my chearful hopes were deſtined to

ſuffer the mildew of diſappointment. My pupil was not compoſed of materials that could be ſhaped into any pleaſing form. From being the darling of his mother, he was obſtinate, ſelf-willed, and imperious; from the baſe compliances of a flattering and negligent preceptor, he was ignorant; and, from the habits of early gratification, he was prepared to ſeize the firſt opportunity of ruſhing into every ſenſual and vicious indulgence. To ſuch an youth as this, an honeſt man, who placed his hopes of future honour and happineſs in forming the mind of his pupil to whatever is noble and excellent in the human character, would not be a very acceptable companion. The young man would conſider ſuch a tutor as a ſpy upon his actions, and a check upon his pleaſures; and never having regarded him with eſteem, he would ſoon conſider him with diſguſt. In leſs than ſix months after our departure this was my unfortunate

tunate ſituation. I uſed every means that my racking mind could invent, and ſubmitted to circumſtances which I cannot now juſtify to myſelf, in order to win the confidence of this hopeful youth; but in vain. I ſtrove, with extreme anxiety and the moſt watchful diligence, to infuſe ſome ſort of information into his mind; but this was alſo a fruitleſs labour. In his frequent indiſpoſitions, the conſequences of exceſs, I was his nurſe, his ſervant, and his ſlave; in ſhort, I did every thing, and it availed me nothing. At length, when I found that he had added gaming to his other vices, I wrote to his father, from Naples; related to him the whole hiſtory of his ſon's conduct and my own, during the eighteen months I had been with him; and begged, in the moſt reſpectful terms, and real ſorrow of heart, that he would recal us to England, or diſcharge me from a truſt which I could no longer fulfil. The latter was preferred,

and

and the amiable youth returned my laſt adieu with menace and with inſult. The remainder of his wretched life was but ſhort, and anſwered to the outſet of it. In about two years after my ſeparation from him, he went to his account with all his imperfections on his head.

I was now freed from every engagement; but though I had been rewarded with honour, and even generoſity, by my young man's father, I had engaged in ſo many ſuperfluous and vain expences to oblige this ungrateful diſciple, that my purſe was not ſo weighty as it would otherwiſe have been: it furniſhed me, however, with the means of continuing my travels for upwards of ten months; when I returned to England, rich in knowledge, but poor in pocket, to be ſtunned (for it had that effect upon me) with the moſt public and unreſerved accuſation, that my wretched pupil's miſerable conduct was owing

to

to my ſhameful negligence and abandoned example. This was the language of his parents, not only behind my back, but to my face; and the ſilence of my indignant ſorrow ſerved but to juſtify their injuſtice. Your humanity will, I am ſure, diſpoſe you to think that the meaſure of my mortification was full; and nothing but the moſt afflicting experience could have convinced me that it was deſtined to run over. But ſo it was:—for while I was in the full ſmart of all this ill-treatment, I accidentally met a gentleman whom I had ſeen at Rome, and who, as I then found, had been a ſilent admirer of my conduct and attention towards the brute whom I was then in vain attempting to guide. I told him the ſtory of which my heart was full; when, after much friendly conſolation, he recommended me to make another trial, and, in the moſt flattering terms, propoſed to me the care of his nephew, who was preparing to enter upon his travels.

vels. But, ſickened as I was with ſuch a buſineſs, I did not heſitate to give him a peremptory refuſal. That, however, did not prevent him from renewing his applications; he not only called upon me, but repeatedly wrote to me on the ſubject, and accompanied his entreaties with propoſals ſo kind and liberal, that I do not now think of them without a bluſh, to ſay no more; but, wrung as my heart was at that period, I really believe, that, if he could have offered me eternal, inſtead of temporal advantages, I ſhould not have heſitated an inſtant to refuſe them. This was a deed of intemperate folly, which has coſt me a long ſeries of bitter and unavailing repentance; for the youth, who was offered to my care, is now returned an honour to himſelf, his country, and his nature,—the pride of his family, the idol of his friends, and the admiration of all. What an abundant ſource of happineſs and glory would ſuch an *éleve* have been

been to me! The circumſtance I am about to add, forms the leaſt part of my mortification, but I cannot paſs it by. The firſt act of this amiable young man, on his return to England, was to make the gentleman who accompanied him on his travels, happy and independent by the ſettlement of a proviſion for life, which, with ſuch a friend, would have been more than affluence to me.

In this ſtate of vexation and diſappointment, I had no reſource but in the friendſhip of my excellent friend, Doctor ———, at Oxford, whom I have already mentioned with that ſincere reſpect which he deſerved from all, and which his memory--for he is now no more—will ever continue to receive from me. Indeed, at this period, his was a ſaving friendſhip to me; for he made me the companion of a tour of ſeveral months, through a very conſiderable part

part of England and Scotland. This journey, and with ſuch an aſſociate, greatly amuſed as well as inſtructed me, and ſerved to fortify my mind againſt the recurrence of former diſſatisfactions. But more ſolid marks of kindneſs ſtill accompanied his regard for me; for, by his recommendation, I was named to a very eligible employment under Lord ———, who was, at that time, appointed Embaſſador to the court of Madrid. To qualify myſelf completely for this ſtation, it was neceſſary to make an acquiſition of the Spaniſh language, and when, after four months unremitted application, and a conſiderable expence, I had attained a very competent knowledge of it, Lord ——— was named to an important domeſtic employment, and I found myſelf again upon the wide world, without any conſolation but that which the amiable Mr. Gay poſſeſſed, in a ſimilar diſappointment, of being able to read Don Quixote

in

in its original language. Thus wearied and worn out with a painful ſucceſſion of hot and cold fits, and having ſuſtained at this period an irretrievable loſs, by the ſudden death of my moſt excellent friend, Dr.———, I reſolved to depend no more upon others, but to try whether I could not do ſomething for myſelf; ſo, without communicating my intentions to any one, I retired to the Univerſity, with the determination to prepare a ſplendid tranſlation of a favourite claſſic, who had never yet appeared, with any degree of adequate merit, in the dreſs of our own language. After many months indefatigable labour, my work had attained to ſuch a ſtate of maturity, that I thought it prudent to conſult a bookſeller of eminence in his profeſſion, on the mode and means of its publication; but I was informed, without heſitation, that all my labour had been beſtowed in vain, as a tranſlation of the ſame work, of which

the

the literary world had formed the higheſt expectation, was already in the preſs, and in ſuch a ſtate of forwardneſs as to appear in the early part of the enſuing winter. Nay, the honeſt bookſeller added, with a ſignificant air, that if I had, now and then, relieved my ſtudies with the peruſal of a news-paper, I muſt have ſeen the repeated advertiſements of propoſals for the publication of it. The obſervation, however impertinent, was too true; and I yielded at once to the artful inſinuations of this literary leech, who perſuaded me to ſend my papers to my rival tranſlator, with the hopes that he would make me a generous compenſation for the aſſiſtance they might afford him, or preſent me with an handſome acknowledgment for the ſuppreſſion of them. To this confidential counſellor I entruſted my manuſcripts, with no little vexation indeed, but without further enquiry. That vexation was renewed with additional

onal anguiſh, when, after the lapſe of three months, I received the papers, accompanied with a common note of thanks and declaration, that they had been offered too late to be of any the leaſt utility; though I afterwards diſcovered that they were kept, ſuch a length of time, merely to gain an advantage of preparation, which the bookſeller had made me believe, by an artful lye, was already poſſeſſed. And when the work appeared, which was at leaſt three months after I could have given mine to the world, I found that my generous rival had availed himſelf, in a very free manner indeed, of my labours, without having deigned to aſk my permiſſion, without offering me a line of acknowledgment in his preface, or propoſing to gratify me with the moſt trifling ſhare of the numerous and ſplendid liſt of ſubſcriptions which adorned and rewarded his publication. In a moment of haſty vengeance, I threatened the bookſeller with

with an appeal to the public, and was determined to complete the menace I had made, when I received a viſit from this artful tradeſman, who preſented me with a bank note of twenty pounds, on the miſerable condition that it ſhould bribe me into ſilence. I became inſtantly outrageous, tore the bill into fifty pieces, turned the fellow out of my room, and concluded the paroxyſm of rage by ſeizing my manuſcripts, the fruits of ſo much labour, as well as the parents of ſuch golden hopes, and throwing them into the fire.

I now turned my thoughts to the law, and the ſeals began to dance before me; but the ſtate of my exchequer forbade my engaging in a profeſſion which demands ſomewhat of an independent ſupport, in the interval, between the commencement of ſtudy and beginning of practice,

practice, and ſuch an independence I did not poſſeſs.

The church was the next object of my conſideration; and, having received an invitation from the brother of my deceaſed friend, Doctor ———, to paſs the ſummer with him at his living in the weſt of England, I was reſolved to avail myſelf of his kindneſs, and to conſult him upon the eligibility of entering into holy orders: but he gave me ſuch a pictu. of clerical dependence, deſcribed the common road to eccleſiaſtical preferment and dignity in ſuch unfavourable terms, and gave ſuch an hiſtory of ſpiritual cabals, that I relinquiſhed this deſign, which was never a favourite one, without heſitation. I now determined to think no more of the world, but to eat my bread and water in tranquility, and to bear, if poſſible, with patience, the humble lot that a perverſe and rigorous fate had provided for me.

This

This laſt circumſtance of my life happened but a few months before I had the ſupreme honour of being preſented to you. Nor would I receive, if it were poſſible, an oblivion of all my paſt troubles, with the moſt perfect ſtate of immediate proſperity, in exchange for the happineſs of knowing you, and the ineſtimable bleſſing of your friendſhip. Nor ſhould I, nor will I, again complain of the dark paths wherein I have trod, ſince they have led me on to ſo bright a ſcene of conſolation.

You have now, madam, a ſtrong outline of my life, which has not been without its ſtruggles to acquire ſomewhat of a character and importance, that, at preſent, it does not poſſeſs, and, I believe, will never attain: the croud of intermediate diſſatisfactions and acceſſary circumſtances, which are neceſſary to give the piece its due degree of ſombre colouring,

ing, would furniſh out a volume, and this letter is already verging to that character. Perhaps I may, ſome time or other, be permitted to relate them to your heart, at a moment when your tender curioſity is awake to hear the tale of an afflicted ſpirit. That will be a relief indeed! for having once communicated them to you, I hope and truſt that I ſhall remember them no more.

LETTER THE TENTH.

To Mr. — — —.

I Have read your hiſtory with a degree of mortification equal, at leaſt, to what you muſt have felt in the repetition of it. It is with an honeſt candour that I acknowledge myſelf to have been governed by an opinion that you had, from an extreme

treme ſenſibility, given a more ſable colour to the circumſtances of your life, than they would, in reality, juſtify; but I then knew them only in part. At this moment, when I have them ſo ſtrongly in my mind, and reflect upon the numerous ſubordinate mortifications which muſt have attended upon them, I wonder no longer at the language in which you have ſometimes deſcribed your untoward fortune. The retroſpect of your life—and a mind which has not any object in view muſt neceſſarily be driven back, to it—cannot but be a conſtant ſource of painful ſenſations. It becomes, therefore, your duty, as well as your intereſt, to look forwards to ſomething; and you cannot be at a loſs for right and honourable objects: I am indeed convinced that your mind would turn away, at once, from any other. *Mais il y a peu de choſes qui ſoient impoſſibles dans ce monde; l'application pour les faire reuſſir nous manque*

plus

plus que les moyens. You muſt, therefore, apply to ſomething. Future diſappointment cannot equal that which is paſt;—but even ſuppoſing it to be poſſible that you ſhould be deſtined throughout your life to be the victim of ill-fortune, never ſuffer the unmanly reſolution of yielding to it to diſgrace you. Reſiſt to the laſt, and let your defeat, if you are to be defeated, be ſuch as may rival the glory of the victor. After all, a writer, with whom you muſt be better acquainted than I am, has ſaid, that there is no ſight more worthy the contemplation of Heaven, than a virtuous man ſtruggling with misfortunes. I do not quote the ſententious wiſdom of an antient philoſopher, with a view to inſtruct you, or that I can ſuppoſe human miſery will find much alleviation in the wiſeſt ſayings of the wiſeſt men; but becauſe, from what appears to me to be the real ſtate of human life, of human nature, and a ſupreme providence,

I do

I do really believe the opinion I have quoted to be conſiſtent with the one and the other. But I ſhall leave you to purſue the thought, and make ſuch an application of it as your ſuperior good ſenſe will naturally dictate to you.

In reading your ſtory (and I have read it again and again) I can only obſerve, that there are ſome unhappy moments when the moſt virtuous are the moſt feeble. Had you poſſeſſed no more than the common honour of ſuch as are, in the language of the world, called honourable men, I ſhould not have been employed in this unavailing office of pleaſing, but painful friendſhip; and you would not have found an empty conſolation in unfolding the diſſatisfactions of your ſpirit to one, who, at preſent, has little more than fruitleſs wiſhes and common-place counſels to give you. But the time may come, and, I truſt, it will come, at a period,

riod, perhaps, when expectation is the leaſt awake to a change of fortune, and bring the moſt chearing proſperity along with it. I cannot expreſs how much real delight it would afford me, if I ſhould be ordained to diſſipate the clouds which obſtruct the brighteſt rays of fortune from ſhining on you. Such an office,—I will ſay it, for it is the truth—ſuch an office would be the happieſt of my life. What a delicious moment, when I ſhould command the dark ſcene to remove, and give to your aſtoniſhed ſight your cottage, your mountain, and your groves,—and bid you haſten to the charming, tranquil ſpot,

Where ſweet content may dwell and learned eaſe!

But I have caught your pleaſing deliriums, and, like you, am forced to awake to leſs pleaſing realities.

However, as I do not deſpair for you, I deſire that you will not deſpair for your-

ſelf. It is beneath the character of a wiſe man, eſpecially at your early time of life, to let deſpondency unnerve his faculties, and render him uſeleſs to the world and to himſelf. Shake off this palſy of the mind, by rational and manly exertions. Form ſome plan of employment that may preſerve your underſtanding in exerciſe and vigour. Let not paſt circumſtances ſink you into a ſtate of diſcouragement, which, if ſuffered to become habitual, will abſorb your faculties, and render abortive the exertions of others in your ſervice.

Some of your principal diſappointments, for I will not call them errors, aroſe from a want of that experience which is eſſentially neceſſary in the purſuit of any fortune. That experience you have now attained, and, with ſuch a needful handmaid to aſſiſt you, there is little reaſon to apprehend that you will be again

the

the victim of your own confidence or other men's deceits. Your virtue has hitherto been in a ſtate of infancy, and poſſeſſed the amiable, unſuſpicious weakneſs of that early period. It ought now to aim at the ſtrength and maturity of manhood, and ſhould acquire that power of diſtinguiſhing, and force of reſolution, which can give it the nobleſt energies of its nature.

You are angry with the world, and wiſh to turn your back upon it, as upon an irreconcileable enemy. Pray, my good ſir, do you imagine that you are the only one, I will not ſay in the world, but in the village which you inhabit, who has a right to complain of the world? Alas! my friend, where is the man who is not, has not been, or will not be, with more or leſs variety, in that particular predicament. To be angry with the world is a common folly; ſhow your magnanimity

and forgive it; be a Chriſtian, and return it good for evil!

Think of theſe things, I beſeech you; and if I ſhould not ſee you on Wedneſday, for I have my fears that it may not be practicable for me to enjoy that ſatisfaction as I intended, let me hear from you as uſual. I write in haſte and hurry, and am obliged to have done; but I have yet a moment to aſſure you, that the promotion of your happineſs is very nearly connected with my own.

LETTER THE ELEVENTH.

To — — — — — — —.

Eight o'clock, Thurſday morning.

I came to town yeſterday morning, and being diſappointed of meeting with one kind

kind of perfection, I went, though with great reluctance, in ſearch of another. I could not poſſeſs the happineſs of ſeeing you, and no other means of conſolation preſented themſelves but ſuch as Mr. Garrick afforded me. I went therefore, to ſee him perform Lear, my favourite character for ſtage repreſentation. In all his parts he is wonderful; but in this he more than beggars all deſcription, for he annihilates the powers of it. It is ſaid, there is nothing perfect: Mr. Garrick, however, ſeems to give the lye to this aſſertion; for, to my conception, his acting is without a fault, and affords me a very adequate idea of perfection. But his is the perfection of Art. I could indeed name another example; but ſhe is the perfection of Nature, and poſſeſſes the pre-eminent advantage which Nature has, and ever will have, over her ſeducing rival.

The moment I have written this page of grateful acknowledgments, I ſhall ſet off for ———. I walked to town, and ſhall return to the country in the ſame manner. The exerciſe agrees with me in more reſpects than one. It gives me health, and ſuits the ſtate of my exchequer. Your laſt counſels, like all the former, are the reſult of genuine wiſdom, and ſhall be obeyed. I acknowledge the truth of your opinions as they relate to me, and I only want to have a path marked out for me, to enter with zeal and diligence on my career. Will your goodneſs undertake that friendly office for me? Under ſuch a guidance, if I do not acquire fame or fortune, I ſhall obtain contentment; I ſhall be, as it were, in your ſervice, I ſhall have obeyed you. And I would rather live beneath your ſway, than command the world. Yes, —Cordelia ſhall be queen!

LETTER

LETTER THE TWELFTH.

To Mr — — —.

I Muſt beg of you to anſwer this letter with an honeſt ſincerity. I deſerve it of you; and I truſt that you will not deceive me or betray yourſelf. I have a plain queſtion to aſk you, to which a definitive anſwer muſt be ſpeedily given. Have you any objection to the ſervice of a court, where an attention to exterior appearance, and a ſimple, but not continual attendance, compoſe all the duties? An handſome ſalary, a proſpect of gradual preferment, and the introduction to perſons of rank and power, are the advantages annexed to it.

I wiſh your determination to be that of your own unbiaſſed judgment. You are not to act as if this offer were not to

be refuſed, or that the refuſal would be conſidered as an offence. You cannot offend me, if you act in compliance with the dictates of your own reaſon. Such are the different natures of mankind, that what would be conſummate happineſs to one, might be the completeſt miſery to another. In certain ſituations every individual muſt judge for himſelf. This is one of them; and I deſire you to conſult your own comfort, and that alone, in the anſwer I am to receive from you. I have only to add, that I muſt know your pleaſure by Wedneſday morning.—— Adieu!

LETTER.

LETTER THE THIRTEENTH.

To———————.

I Obey your commands, and unfold the ſtate of my mind in reſpect to the ſubject which your letter of this morning ſo kindly, ſo cordially, and ſo generouſly propoſes to my conſideration.

There are certain prejudices which, by ſome means or other, infuſe themſelves into our minds; and, having grown with our growth, and ſtrengthened with our ſtrength, become ſo decided a part of our character, as to be almoſt inſeparable from it. There are very few, I believe, who are entirely free from ſome or other of them. At leaſt, I am not one of the number; and among the prepoſſeſſions which belong to me, I poſſeſs a moſt root-

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ed one againſt a court and all its appendages of parade, vanity, and deceit.

I never was at *Saint James*'s but three times in my life: twice on birth-days, merely to indulge a natural curioſity; and once, when the city of London preſented an addreſs to the King, from a deſire to ſee his Majeſty in the ſtate and magnificence of ſuch a ſolemn occaſion. The Court is a country of which I ſcarce know the geography, whoſe language I do not underſtand, with whoſe inhabitants I have never had any communication, and whoſe manners, laws, and cuſtoms, are as unknown to me as the hieroglyphics of an Egyptian obeliſk. I have indeed read and heard of it, but I do not remember one favourable deſcription: dangerous coaſts, hidden rocks, fatal quickſands, ſudden ſqualls, and ſweeping hurricanes, are univerſally ſaid to ſurround and make a part of it; while its inhabitants have ever been

been deſcribed as an hypocritical, faithleſs, traitorous race, whoſe vices are contagious, and whoſe friendſhip is ruin.

L 'ingannare, il mentir, la frode, il furto,
Et la rapina di pieta veſtita,
Creſcer col danno e precipzio altrui,
E far a ſe de l'altrui biaſmo more,
Son le virtu di quella gente infida*.

Though I have been affected, even to tears, at this inſtance of your anxious regard, I cannot reflect, with a ſerious mind, on the idea of your philoſophic friend being equipped in the parade of court ſervice, and engaged in the verſatile ceremonies of ſuch a ſituation. I ſhould be the very figure of aukwardneſs, both in body

* Deceit and falſehood, fraud, and robbery,
And rapine cloath'd in fair religion's garb,
The wiſh to riſe upon another's ruin,
And honour gain by telling others crimes,
Theſe are the virtues of that faithleſs race.

and

and mind; for I ſhould think as clumſily as I ſhould act, and prove a woeful diſhonour to your recommendation. My mind, however idly it may be employed, has too much buſineſs of its own to poſſeſs the calm vacancy ſo neceſſary to a courtier's duty. Beſides, I could not be ſatisfied with receiving the wages of idleneſs, and ranging myſelf among thoſe gaudy miſerable figures who compoſe and are neceſſary to the pageantry of a palace. I do declare, in the ſincerity of my heart, that I had rather be a turnſpit in the royal kitchen, than a ſtalking court automaton, though it ſhould be my duty to encreaſe the group of ſplendid nothings in the preſence of Majeſty. I truſt and believe that I have an heart to lick the duſt before ſuperior virtue; but, at the ſame time, I have a mind which would diſdain to cringe before the fool or the villain, though decked with titles, ſurrounded with wealth, and cloathed with greatneſs.

I am

I am not one of thoſe who could be contented

> To live by pulling off the hat;—
> And, ev'ry day and ev'ry hour,
> To bow to images of power.

Thus have I given you, moſt excellent lady, an unequivocal proof of my diſpoſition to obey you, in returning you the undiſguiſed ſentiments of my heart, on an occaſion where precaution might have been employed without reproach. In obedience to you I turn my back upon an offer made by your generous kindneſs: Is it poſſible? But you may be aſſured, that if, inſtead of that generous, conſiderate, unparalleled tenderneſs for my failings, which was dictated by your friendſhip, you had only adviſed me, or even hinted to me, in the moſt diſtant manner, to engage in the trammels of a court-ſervice, your counſel ſhould have been followed without heſitation—I would not have

have delayed a moment to obey you. Since you have deigned to take me, as it were, by the hand, and have had the goodneſs to ſcatter, now and then, a roſe-bud in my way; I ſhall not aſk whither I am going, but be contented to take the path your friendly wiſdom ſhall point out to me. Conſider me, I beſeech you, as the creature of your will, for I am yours, and, whatever may be my deſtiny, I ſhall be yours for ever!—

LETTER THE FOURTEENTH.

To Mr. — — —.

I Shall not have a moment's peace till I have written to you; though, alas! I may not regain it when this letter is finiſhed. The ſtate of your health alarms me greatly. I ſaid nothing to you on the

the ſubject, but your appearance made me tremble; and, from ſome circumſtances which I afterwards learned from Mrs. ———, I deſire you will not delay an inſtant in conſulting Doctor Elliot. He is a man of great phyſical ſkill, and has made the malady which, to my fears, ſeems to threaten you, the particular object of his attention. But though he is a phyſician of humanity and liberal ſentiments, and would be glad to exert his ſkill for a man of genius, learning, and virtue, without *any other* reward than the ſatisfaction of doing it, I ſhall not wound your delicacy, by propoſing ſuch an obligation to him. Indeed, it is my deſign to monopolize all the obligations to myſelf. I know that your revenues will not admit of frequent applications to phyſical aſſiſtance, but mine will; and I think your ſituation is too critical for me to ſuffer any idle ſcruples on my own part or on yours to prevent your applying, in the moſt

moſt ſatisfactory manner, to the immediate aid of the firſt medicinal experience.

I really requeſt, as a favour, that you will not heſitate an hour in complying with the wiſhes expreſſed on this paper. In your way to Doctor Elliot, call on Mrs. ————, who will more fully illuſtrate my anxiety about you, and the means it propoſes to relieve itſelf and you. I am not to receive any objection or a remonſtrance on your part; nothing but an immediate and implicit obedience will ſatisfy me. Let nothing now employ your thoughts, but the means of your recovery, whatever they may be. If I am ſatisfied to command, you, ſurely, cannot heſitate to obey.

LETTER.

LETTER THE FIFTEENTH.

To ———————.

I Have ſeen the phyſician, who aſſures me that I am in no immediate danger, and that there will be no danger at all, if I apply to immediate remedies. The principal of them is the Briſtol waters; and the moment I have given you this information, I muſt prepare for my journey. The day after to-morrow I ſhall take the conveyance of a Bath machine, and ſo proceed to the fountain that is to reſtore me to health, and, ſince you take ſo kind and ſo unexpected an intereſt in my preſervation, may I not add, to you. What can I ſay, or write, or think? I poſſeſs an heart, Madam, overflowing with gratitude for your goodneſs, impreſſed with an idolatrous veneration of your virtues, and big with the hopes that I ſhall be preſerved for no other purpoſe—indeed, indeed, I ought

ought to have no other—than to dedicate a life, which is already yours, to the ſervice of its miſtreſs, and its preſerver.

LETTER THE SIXTEENTH.

To Mr. — — —.

I Have juſt time, my friend, to write one word at parting. I am ſatisfied with your phyſician, and, what is better, I am contented with you; which, as you well know, has not been always the caſe. Your ready and ſubmiſſive compliance with my wiſhes is as pleaſing to me as I truſt and pray it may prove beneficial to you. Indeed, I have been told that you expreſſed ſome ſort of diſcontent at the eagerneſs with which I forwarded your journey to Briſtol; and, to humour your ſelf-tormenting ſpirit, which, however, does not deſerve

deſerve ſuch an indulgence, I ſhall juſt obſerve, that I wiſh not to encreaſe the ſeparation between us; but am anxious to prevent what your diſorder threatens, if not timely oppoſed, a ſeparation for ever.

Reſtleſs mortal! if I had ſent you an handkerchief wet with my tears, and had let you die, you would have been happy: I am now exerting all the means in my power to give you life, and you are miſerable. I can weep as well as others; but that friendſhip is not worth a ſigh, which is content to lay itſelf down in the lap of ſorrow, and waſte its griefs in fruitleſs deſpair. Friendſhip has its hopes and its apprehenſions; but the former take the greater ſhare in mine, and give it activity to preſs forwards to its object. I may feel, and I may indulge my feelings, but I would rather quit my darling ſenſibility for ever, than ſuffer it to predominate over my reaſon, and drown that ſobriety of

of conduct, which gives, not to friendſhip alone, but to every other virtue, the beſt energies of which it is capable.

With this ſhort leſſon, my friend, I bid you farewel. Be careful of yourſelf, I beſeech you. Pay every poſſible attention to the means of your recovery. You know who is intereſted in it. If you find the public machine fatiguing, do not heſitate a moment to quit it, and travel poſt by ſuch eaſy ſtages as may be agreeable to you. Let me hear of your arrival, with every particular of your ſituation. I beg of you, however, not to begin with writing long letters: I only wiſh to be inſtructed in what relates immediately to yourſelf. Want for nothing—nay, I charge you to indulge yourſelf in every thing that may promote your eaſe and ſatisfaction. No offerings can be ſo acceptable to my friendſhip as your unreſerved

ſerved applications to it. The fountain flows but for you!

LETTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

To ———————.

I Cannot quit the place where I have known and ſeen you, where I have been ſo highly favoured with your humane and tender friendſhip, without a ſenſe of regret which I cannot expreſs. Though life may wait to bleſs me at the ſpring to which I haſten, and though death lies in ambuſh to make an early victim of me if I ſtay, it is your command, rather than my own inclination, that ſets me on to-morrow's journey. To loſe the poſſibility of ſeeing you for ſo many months, is a melancholy reflection. You will ſoon leave

leave the capital, and I cannot hope for your return till the beginning of January; ſo that I have a very ſolitary proſpect before me.

I know it to be the leading characteriſtic of your heart to diſdain any narrow partial ſyſtem of benevolence; and I am certain that you will afford me the enlivening conſolations which your letters alone are capable of beſtowing upon me: nevertheleſs, I cannot but declare that I would rather enjoy an hour of your converſation than an whole ream of epiſtles, though they were written with your pen and came from your heart. They give me, I moſt willingly acknowledge, unparalleled examples of elegant taſte and refined ſentiment; they diſplay to me the colour, ſhape, and contexture of your chaſte and beautiful thoughts; they preſent me the picture of a character, amiable beyond any deſcription but their own; and

and they tell me of a kind and gentle friendſhip which is the ſource of my happineſs and the prop of my exiſtence: but, alas! they cannot convey to me the enchanting ſmile, the angelic voice, the pitying look, the thouſand graceful deeds, which I have ſeen with ſo much delight, and felt with ſo much rapture, in your preſence. The conſtant hopes of enjoying even a tranſitory view of theſe preeminent charms, to-morrow's dawn will annihilate for a time, and, perhaps for ever! Ere you receive this paper—— the rapid wheels of an impatient machine, to which my deſponding fancy may give an accelerated motion, will be hurrying my ſolitary, agitated ſpirit to a diſtance which appears to me to be at the extremity of the globe. Who knows but it may bear me to that bourn from whence no traveller returns? I fly in ſearch of health to that ſpot, where ſuch numbers, engaged in the ſame fallacious

cious errand, have found their tomb. Should their lot be mine, a ready reſignation awaits it, and there will be an end of a reſtleſs, feveriſh being, whoſe loſs will be felt by none, who fills a place that may be occupied by a more uſeful member of ſociety, and whoſe death will releaſe your benevolence from its preſent reſtraint, and let it flow again into all its former channels of varied goodneſs.

Phyſicians think it humanity to flatter the dying, and feel it to be a diſgrace that fate ſhould ſnatch a patient from their care. Hence it is, that they ſo often employ remedies which they know to be uſeleſs, and, when they have a fair opportunity, diſpatch the victim of death to receive the laſt, idle, dear-bought preſcription, from the pens of other medicinal profeſſors. While there is life there are hopes, is a proverb that does not find ſufficient juſtification in the few occaſional

occaſional examples of unexpected recovery. In Catholic countries, the phyſician muſt acknowledge his works: he is there obliged to pronounce the moment of danger, leſt the unhappy patient ſhould eſcape from the world without the all-ſaving paſſport of certain rites and ceremonies, to which the Romiſh church has excluſively attached the poſſibility of ſalvation.

Whatever the event may be with reſpect to myſelf, while life and thought remain, my mind and ſpirit will be occupied in reflecting on your conſummate excellence; and my laſt act of gratitude to Providence, for having permitted me to enjoy the ineſtimable bleſſing of your friendſhip, will be accompanied with the moſt devout ſenſibility of that goodneſs which beſtowed it upon me. I only wiſh to live for your happineſs! But of what am I writing, and whither does my

erring imagination bear me? What can my life, if it were to be extended to the longeſt period, what can it do for you? It would be better for me to die, and that my laſt ſigh ſhould be yours.

LETTER THE EIGHTEENTH.

To Mr. — — —.

YOUR melancholy farewel epiſtle was unexpected and unwelcome. Inſtead of preparing yourſelf, by previous repoſe, for the common fatigue incident to your journey, you impair the little ſtrength you have by ſitting up till midnight, to write your miſerable thoughts, to encourage them in your own breaſt, where they do not want encouragement, and to convey them to mine, where they will find none. You quote the doctrines of the

the Roman Catholic church; I wiſh you would adopt its principle of obedience, and every thing would go well with you both in body and mind.

I had prided myſelf, and was more than pleaſed with the idea, that you were reſtored to yourſelf; that the gloom of melancholy fancy had been diſſipated for ever; and that I had been the happy cauſe of ſuch an happy change in your character. But diſappointment treads upon the heels of exultation; and you, who ought to encourage the deception, are in haſte to mortify me with the aſſurance that all my labour has been in vain.

My regard for you diſpoſes me to uſe every conſiſtent exertion for your comfort and repoſe. There is not a moment of your life wherein you can be inſenſible to this truth; but I am not qualified, nor can I ſubmit, to rock for ever

the cradle of your melancholy fancies. If your own reaſon cannot lull them to repoſe, your caſe is deſperate. I do not act the part of thoſe phyſicians whom you accuſe of miſplaced flattery; I tell you what I think, and what your own reflection will inſtruct you to be the truth.

Your health will, I doubt not, be reeſtabliſhed, if you purſue, with common prudence, the means already preſcribed to you. This is the honeſt opinion of your phyſician. I have contrived to be informed of his real, unreſerved ſentiments concerning you; and his ready and poſitive declaration was as favourable as I could wiſh it. But who is there that can miniſter to minds diſeaſed? Little can be done by others? and in ſuch a caſe it muſt be ſaid,—Phyſician, heal thyſelf.

I am really angry with you. In the name of ſober reaſon, why did you not

ſeal

ſeal your letter with black wax, as an happy prognoſtic of that approaching fate which you ſeem to invite with ſuch a melancholy zeal. But, for my own comfort,—for I wiſh you to live, God knows I do,—you have no one ſymptom of a dying man. One of the moſt ſtriking, and, to by-ſtanders, one of the moſt affecting prognoſtics of an incurable ſtate in conſumptive perſons, is the certain hopes which they entertain of a reſtoration to health. That freedom from pain and tranquil ſpirit, which is ſaid frequently to precede their diſſolution, deceives them into the vain proſpect of future enjoyments, at the very moment when the grand foe to life is at their chamber-door. You, my friend, have none of theſe alarming appearances; if one may be permitted to judge by contraries, you muſt be at the eve of perfect health, at leaſt, it is pretty evident that you will not die of a diſeaſe, where chearful hopes are dangerous ſymp-

toms. It is this reflection that arms me with patience on reading the laſt dying ſpeech and confeſſion, which your *eſprit atrabilaire* dictated to you the evening before your departure.

The iſſues of life and death are in better hands than ours, and it is our duty to be reſigned to the diſpenſations of a juſt Providence, whatever they may be; but, by the indulgence of a fretful, impatient diſpoſition, to deſtroy that tranquillity of mind which is neceſſary to health, is not only a folly but a crime. You have done me the honour to ſuppoſe me an inſtrument ordained by Heaven to do you good; your oppoſition, therefore, to my reaſonable deſires, is an offence againſt the kindneſs that protects you:— you are ungrateful to Heaven in being guilty of ingratitude to what you have been pleaſed to think its deputed power. Your next letter, which I expect with impatience

patience, will, I truſt, tell me better things. I know how to diſtinguiſh between real and fancied affliction. The ſecret complaints of confiding virtue, and the idle lamentations of fickly fancy, will find a very different reception from me. I ſhould pity both, as all human failings and miſeries, whatever they may be, demand commiſeration; but it is the former alone that will find an aſylum in my breaſt. Think of this, and learn to reaſon better.

I have diſcovered an anxiety for your welfare, which would find but little juſtification, were it generally known. Think on this, my friend, and, at leaſt, pour not forth your complaints to me. If you are not happy, it is not becauſe your happineſs depends upon me; for I have done what I could, and, perhaps, more than I ought, to make you happy. I am neither the diſpenſer of happineſs

nor the miſtreſs of life; if I were, your days ſhould be long and proſperous: but I may endeavour to aſſiſt the one, and to afford the means that may prolong the other; and you know how far I have exerted myſelf, in both theſe particulars, for you. I ſhall add, for I am diſpoſed to humour you, that, in ſpite of yourſelf, I look forwards to the time when I ſhall reap the fruits of all my paſt and future endeavours for your ſake.

I write in the terms and language of ſober friendſhip. It is not from any idle vanity that I wiſh to exert the power you have given me over you, but becauſe I think it equally becoming in me, as it is neceſſary to you, that I ſhould uſe a ſerious tone with you. I do it by compulſion, and it is a reſtraint upon my mind that harraſſes and fatigues it. I ſhall, therefore, have done with this aſſurance, that

that I ſhall never be ſatisfied with you, till I perceive that you are ſatisfied with yourſelf.

LETTER THE NINETEENTH.

To ———————.

Wedneſday Evening.
Speen-hill, near Newbury.

I Am thus far on my journey, and here I have quitted the machine; not ſo much from the mode of travelling, which is by no means inconvenient, but on account of the miſerable medly of company into which my perſecuting ſtars had thrown me.

A vulgar talkative woman and noiſy child, a ſottiſh Briſtol tradeſman, and a jaundiced London pewterer, with a little

black ſnarling ill-natured dog, were allotted to be the companions of my journey. The woman and the pewterer commenced a diſpute about the little dog at the ſtones end, which continued as far as Salt Hill, when the gentleman fell aſleep, and with his noſe anſwered to the previous noiſe of his tongue. The good woman inſiſted, with a very ſplenetic vehemence, that dogs were not fit companions for chriſtians; and her antagoniſt turned the tables upon her ſqualling brat; and ſo the jar continued: the Briſtolian only interrupted them every five minutes, with a propoſal to drink and be friends; as you will naturally ſuppoſe, I did not open my lips. At Reading, however, when the battle began to be renewed, the contending parties took the kind advice of their companion, and did drink, and were friends; but, alas! their peace, like that of greater powers, proved but a ſhort breathing time for the recommencement

of

of hoſtilities, which very ſoon burſt forth, to the no ſmall ſurprize of the mediating power, who laid all the blame of his ill-ſucceſs on the weakneſs of the punch. He propoſed, therefore, a ſtronger bowl at the next ſtage, and ſeemed ſecure that every difference would readily yield to a more pacifying draught. Here I bid them adieu, and here I ſhall reſt to-morrow, and take my chance of finding a place in one of the many paſſing vehicles of the next day.

The air is reviving, and the ſurrounding ſcenery, as you well know, is extremely beautiful. I propoſe viſiting the ruins of *Donnington Caſtle*, and the ſeat of Mr. *Andrews* in its neighbourhood. This gentleman, with a taſte peculiar to himſelf, has paid a very judicious attention to the circumſtance of its being the birth-place of *Chaucer*, and has not only given his houſe the antique form of Gothic

days,

days, but has diſpoſed his grounds after a deſcription in one of *Chaucer's* poems. If Mr. A — — knew how much I admire his veneration for our Britiſh claſſic, as well as the particular manner wherein he has diſplayed it, he would invite me at leaſt to take a breakfaſt with him. I hope, however, at all events, to bruſh away to-morrow morning's dew in his delightful and intereſting improvements. I would give more than the value of the book to poſſeſs our antient poet's works during the courſe of my propoſed rambles. Local circumſtances afford no ſmall aid to ſuch an enthuſiaſm as mine. To my fancy, I never read *Shakeſpeare* with ſo much delight as at *Stratford upon Avon*, after I had paid my devout homage at the tomb of that immortal genius. Nor were my raptures leſs ardent, when, reclined on a ſlope, beneath the ruins of *Ludlow Caſtle*, or roving among the groves of *Oakley Park*, I devoured the

Comus

Comus of Milton. It is in ſuch moments as theſe, that the mind, free from every malign influence, expanding with the moſt extended benevolence, ſuperior to every impetuous paſſion, and in full poſſeſſion of an animated contentment, enjoys the ſhort, but unalloyed repaſt of intellectual pleaſure. If I had nothing more than a *Canterbury Tale*, it would prove an infinite addition to the banquet of to-morrow. But I muſt be content to let the living ſcene have its effects, whatever they may be, unaſſiſted but by the fancy of the moment, which, however, I believe, will not entirely deſert me.

There was a time, indeed, when I could have enjoyed myſelf alone, and have found a full ſenate in my own boſom; but that time is paſt, is gone; and I now ſigh after ſome one to whom I might communicate my feelings, and from whoſe

whoſe heart they would be returned back to mine, heightened by the exquiſite colouring of female ſenſibility.

How ſweet to wind along the cool retreat;
To look and gaze on Delia as I go;
To mingle ſweet diſcourſe with kiſſes ſweet,
And teach my lovely ſcholar all I know!

But what does it avail me to turn my thoughts to ſcenes which I can never enjoy? Wherefore ſhould I look to the vain proſpect of perfect happineſs, in a ſtate where imperfect happineſs is all that the happieſt can attain. We chaſe the gawdy phantom as children run to catch the rainbow: the brilliant vapour delights the diſtant eye, but evades the moſt eager purſuit. There is, however, a very conſiderable difference between our following the unſubſtantial appearance, and turning one's back upon the reality of happineſs, ſuch as it is. In the former, the

he pleaſure is great, till truth breaks the charm, and diſappointment ſoon wears away; but in the latter, there is not a gleam of ſatisfaction: all is dark, and, as you advance, the gloom encreaſes. The ſun of this world riſes not upon it, and conſolation lies beyond the grave. Hope, indeed, expands at that idea, and a ray of brightneſs, borrowed from the eternal world, illuminates the duſky ſcenes of this. But I am warned of the poſt's departure, which only allows me time to add, that I received your kind adieu,—and that I bleſs you for it.

LETTER

LETTER THE TWENTIETH.

To — — — — — — —.

Briſtol Hot-Wells.

I SHOULD not have waited four and twenty hours to have given you notice of my being ſafe at my journey's end, but I did not arrive yeſterday till it was too late for the poſt. This delay, I flatter myſelf will afford me an opportunity of making my letter more intereſting to you.

I am already maſter of a comfortable apartment at *Clifton*, in a ſituation delightful beyond deſcription. I have conſulted a phyſician, who is a genteel, agreeable man, and whoſe only fault conſiſts in bearing ſuch a full and ruddy countenance, to contraſt with the pale and mea-

gre

gre viſages of his patients. The doctor has recommended me to an apothecary; and I have, already, an horſe to ride, and an aſs to give me milk, with a little boy for my Valet de Chambre. I prepare my milk chocolate myſelf, and the good lady of the houſe has undertaken to give me my daily meal, in my own chamber, and at a moderate price. I have alſo been at the fountain, and added another figure to the phthiſical croud who quaff the ſalutary waters. On my entrance among them, I ſhould have imagined myſelf to have been in the land of ſhades, if the ſad infirmities which clung to ſo many of them had not convinced me that I was ſtill in this miſerable world. It was a cloudy, ſullen morning, and the towering rocks, which riſe in ſolemn rudeneſs on either ſide of the river, and, as it were, bend over it, looked like an entrance to the regions of eternal darkneſs.

I was

I was glad to re-aſcend the hill, and charm away my gloomy thoughts by contemplating that brilliant nature which the eye meets there, and cannot fail to gladden the heart. It exhilarated mine, and I ſeem to poſſeſs a contentment that I did not think would have viſited my harraſſed and anxious ſpirit. I hope this halcyon calm will not prove fallacious, and that I may not owe to the ſudden change of ſcene and novelty of objects the unuſual tranquillity that bleſſes me at this moment.

There is ſomething inexpreſſibly refreſhing to the mind in the view of a beautiful and luxuriant landſcape,—Verdant meadows, tufted groves, wide-ſpreading trees, maſſy woods, ſcattered villages, riſing ſpires, ſwelling hills, and winding ſtreams, with the living ſcenes that animate them, when brought together in one view,

view, variegated with ſun and ſhade, riſing by degrees from darkneſs at the morning's dawn, glowing beneath the brightneſs of a mid day ſun, or ſinking gradually through the purple miſts of evening to the gloom of night, form a ſucceſſion of objects to which nothing but vice and folly can be inſenſible. A ſenſe of moral beauty in the ſoul can alone qualify us to feel, at leaſt as they ought to be felt, thoſe pictures of natural beauty, with which the bounty of Providence has cloathed ſo large a part of the material world. The more awful features of nature, the Alpine mountain, the wide-extended foreſt, the fiery volcano, and the boundleſs ocean, awaken different and leſs pleaſing ſenſations; but they all tend to moral improvement, and intellectual pleaſure in the mind, which has the happy capacity to receive and apply them to the beneficent purpoſes, for which, among

among many others, they were graciouſly beſtowed. *Sterne*, or ſome one who writes in his manner, has obſerved, that there are ſome ſcenes of nature ſo exquiſitely beautiful as to charm away the ſenſe of pain; ſo that the man, who has beheld them, goes away, and remembers his ſorrows no more. My window could furniſh one of theſe faſcinating pictures, and, in my ride, this morning, I ſaw many of them.

But I am fatiguing you with a deſcription of what you have ſo often ſeen, and offering obſervations to one who not only can make far better than mine, but will alſo apply them to better and wiſer purpoſes. Perhaps it is the conſciouſneſs, that I am now, as it were, converſing with objects, with which you have ſo often converſed, that makes me ſo contented with them. To ride over the ſame ground

ground where you have rode, to be charmed with the ſame proſpects that have delighted you, and to drink at the ſpring which you have taſted, are circumſtances of infinite ſatisfaction to me. If your ſummer's retreat did but bring you even into this part of the kingdom, I ſhould be ſatisfied. If I could climb a mountain, and catch a view of the diſtant hill beneath which you dwelt, or even behold an intervening object which you might ſometimes ſee, my complaining ſpirit, I believe, would ceaſe to complain.

In making ſuch declarations as theſe, I ſhould offend any kindneſs but yours—However they may beat at the portals of my heart for liberty, it does not become me to let them forth. But your benevolence knows how to paſs over the erring effuſions of a mind which becomes intoxicated

intoxicated when it addreſſes itſelf to you. In all my failings and my follies, and you have known an abundance of them, your generous, ſympathizing friendſhip will repeat its accuſtomed kindneſs, ſo often experienced by me;—it will pity and forgive them.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.